

Message Text

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43

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOT-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 FAA-00 SY-05 MCT-01

SS-15 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 /058 W

----- 002398

R 211527Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3209

INFO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE GUATEMALA 6586

E.O. 11652 NA

TAGS: HEAIR, GT

SUBJ: INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT SECURITY

REF: STATE 212490

1. GUATEMALA WAS VISITED SEP 13 AND 14 BY WILLIAM RACH OF THE FAA AIR TRANSPORTATION SECURITY FIELD OFFICE IN MIAMI. RACH WAS RECENTLY GIVEN RESPONSIBILITY FOR ASSURING THAT AIRLINES WHICH FLY CENTRAL AMERICAN-US ROUTES FOLLOW FAA SECURITY MEASURES AND IS CURRENTLY ON FAMILIARIZATION SWING THROUGH CA.

2. IN EXPERT OPINION OF RACH, SECURITY PROCEDURES PRACTICED AT LA AURORA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN GUATEMALA CITY ARE GOOD. RAMP SECURITY IS EXCELLENT AND PASSENGER SCREENING POINT IS AT ENTRY TO SOLE CONCOURSE SO THAT THOUGH UNSCREENED PERSONS CAN MINGLE WITH TRANSIT PASSENGERS IN THE AIRPORT, ALL BOARDING PASSENGERS MUST UNDERGO SCREENING. SCREENING PROCEDURE, PAID FOR BY PANAM BUT
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ALWAYS IN USE, OBLIGES PASSENGERS TO PASS THROUGH

METAL DETECTOR AND TO SUBMIT CARRY-ON BAGGAGE TO PHYSICAL SEARCH. WITHOUT X-RAY EQUIPMENT OR TRAINED DOGS, CARGO BAGGAGE IS ESSENTIALLY UNSCREENED. RACH PREPARING MORE DETAILED REPORT FOR HIS OFFICE.

3. RACH VISIT TIMELY AND APPRECIATED SINCE DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION IS CURRENTLY DEVELOPING A PLAN TO DEAL WITH ALL TYPES OF EMERGENCIES THAT COULD OCCUR AT LA AURORA AIRPORT. PLAN BEING WORKED OUT TOGETHER WITH ALL THE AIRLINES THAT USE THIS AIRPORT. CONSEQUENTLY, SLIDE AND TAPE SHOWS WHICH RACH BROUGHT ON SCREENING PROCEDURES AND BOMB THREATS WERE SEEN BY LARGE NUMBER OF AIRLINE AND AIRPORT EMPLOYEES.

4. AIRPORT ASSISTANT MANAGER IN CHARGE OF SECURITY AT LA AURORA, CARLOS DELEON MENA, ATTENDED FAA AVIATION SECURITY COURSE AT FAA TRANSPORTATION SAFETY INSTITUTE IN APRIL 1976.

5. THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC WORKS HAS BEEN SITTING ON 1970 HAGUE CONVENTION ON HIJACKING SINCE 1972. THIS MINISTRY, RESPONSIBLE FOR CIVIL AVIATION, MUST RENDER AN OFFICIAL OPINION ABOUT THE CONVENTION AS THE FIRST STEP TOWARD RATIFICATION. THE 1971 MONTREAL CONVENTION ON SABOTAGE HAS BEEN APPROVED BY MINISTRY AND COUNCIL OF STATE AND IS NOW IN CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN RELATIONS. EMBASSY WILL URGE RATIFICATIONS WITH APPROPRIATE GOG AUTHORITIES AS OPPORTUNITIES ARISE.
ANDREWS

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